

DETAILED ACTION

1. Prosecution history from parent application 09/563,013 is incorporated by reference.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Brian Michaelis #34,221 on 12/16/08.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 2, insert on line 5 directly before -filtering-, "using a vision system to carry out the steps of:" and also

insert on line 9 immediately after -of sets of features;- the following

"wherein the step of processing further includes the steps of: matching features from a right image and a left image to form a set of horizontal disparities; and matching features from a right image and a top image to form a set of vertical disparities, wherein said right and left images were obtained from image acquisition devices arranged along a horizontal line, and said right and top images were obtained from image acquisition devices arranged along a vertical line substantially perpendicular to said horizontal line;"

Cancel claim 4.

In claim 5, replace –claim 4- on line 1 with “claim 2”.

In claim 12, insert on line 5 directly before –separately-, “using a vision system to carry out the steps of:”.

Election/Restrictions

3. The election without traverse of the restriction is noted, however after further consideration the Examiner determined that the original restriction requirement was improper, thus the restriction has been withdrawn. Claims 2-15 have been examined herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 2-3, and 5-15 are allowed.

5. The following is an examiner’s statement of reasons for allowance: Regarding claim 2, none of the prior art of record discloses in combination with the other limitations of the claim wherein the step of processing further includes the steps of: matching features from a right image and a left image to form a set of horizontal disparities; and matching features from a right image and a top image to form a set of vertical disparities, wherein said right and left images were obtained from image acquisition devices arranged along a horizontal line, and said right and top images were obtained from image acquisition devices arranged along a vertical line substantially perpendicular to said horizontal line. The closest prior art was cited in the parent case 09/563,013 Dhond et al. “Structure from Stereo- A review”, however Dhond does not disclose the limitations set forth above. Regarding claim 12 none of the prior art of record discloses

in combination with the other limitations of the claim stereoscopically matching features between said right and left images to create a set of vertical feature matches, each having a disparity vector; stereoscopically matching features between said right and top images to create a set of horizontal feature matches, each having a disparity vector; selecting all features from the set of vertical feature matches having a disparity that is substantially vertical and discarding corresponding features from the set of horizontal matches, to obtain a combined set of selected vertical features and horizontal features; and extracting a set of 3-D features from said combined set of features, based upon predetermined camera geometry.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Contact Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JOHN B. STREGE whose telephone number is (571)272-7457. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday between the hours of 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matthew Bella can be reached on (571) 272-7778. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/John Strege/
Temporary Full Sig. Examiner
12/17/08